

- 1: Warner, W. Lloyd. A Black Civilization: A Social Study of an Australian Tribe. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937.

Pp. xviii, 594; map; 9 plates; 16 charts; 3 figures; glossary; appendix.
Yale: Nkd95 N6 937w.

[This study of the Murngin offers an account of their kinship system, clan and moiety organization, mythology and ceremonial practices, fueds, funerals, sorcery and shamanism. In addition there is material on technology and material culture and Malay contacts. The author's approach is basically functionalist and there are long interpretive sections following the presentation of each body of substantive data. Under the heading Murngin, Warner includes some 8 different tribes. In his presentation of the material, however, he does not differentiate between different Murngin groups except for noting some North-South differences in shamanistic practices. In the areas covered the source provides an excellent and comprehensive account of Murngin culture and social organization. However there is little material on community organization, political structure, or leadership, socialization processes, and economic organization. Moreover the religious sections

1: Warner, W. Lloyd.

tend to concentrate on several major ceremonies and their meaning. The author is a social anthropologist who did field work in the area. -- Analyst]

Field dates: 1926-1929

Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1960

- 2: Berndt, Ronald M. "Murngin" (Wulamba) Social Organization. American Anthropologist, Vol. 57, pp. 84-106. Menasha, Wisconsin: American Anthropological Association, 1955.

Yale: Nk10 Am37 II.57

[This source offers an analysis of Murngin social organization with particular emphasis on the different lines of descent considered important by the author. In particular the mother's brother and mother's mother's brother relationship is analyzed and matrilineal cross-cousin marriage is discussed. Much reference is made to the work of Radcliffe-Brown and Leach, and ideas of both of these anthropologists are used and discussed. In addition Berndt considers the diverse types of unilineal descent groups found among the Murngin, their organization and functions, and the parallels and differences between such groupings and the classical picture of a segmentary lineage organization as outlined by Fortes.]

The author, an anthropologist, did field work among the Murngin. --Analyst]

Field date: 1946-1950

Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1960

- 3: Mountford, Charles P. Records of the American-Australian Scientific Expedition to Arnhem Land, 1: Art, Myth and Symbolism. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1956.

Pp. xxx, 513; 159 plates, 68 figures.

Yale: S29. N.6. 956A.1

[Only pp. i-xxx, 1-15, and 267-513 were processed for the Murngin file.]

[The material for this source was compiled by the author from the joint results of the combined American-Australian expedition to Arnhem Land in 1948. The field work undertaken by this expedition was an attempt to study systematically various aspects of aboriginal life, and was sponsored jointly by the National Geographic Society, the Smithsonian Institution, and various branches of the Australian government. The author, an ethnologist specializing in aboriginal folklore and art, has contributed a thorough and exhaustive study and analysis of Murngin art, both in its technical aspects and as it relates in its symbolism to the legends and mythology of the people. The text is profusely illustrated with examples of aboriginal art as originally presented on bark paintings, ceremonial objects, and implements of daily use. Detailed analysis

3: Mountford, Charles P.

of each symbol is then given.

Parts 2 and 3 of this source, pp. 16-266, have not been processed, since they deal with other groups not pertinent to this file. In Part 6, Astronomy, only the section dealing with the Murngin proper has been marked for content, the remainder being placed in category 171. --Analyst]

Field date: 1948

Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1960

- 4: Berndt, Ronald M. and Catherine H. Berndt. Sacred Figures of Ancestral Beings of Arnhem Land. Oceania, Vol. 18, pp. 309-326. Sydney: Australian National Research Council, 1948.

2 plates; 2 text figures.

Yale: Nk10 Oc2 18

[In this article the authors describe a number of sacred figurines of the Murngin. The meaning of each figure and of the various designs and stylistic elements are discussed, some of the beliefs and mythology connected with the deities represented by these figures are given, and their use in ceremonies as sacred totemic objects are briefly referred to. A number of illustrations of these figures are given. The authors are anthropologists who did field work among the Murngin. --Analyst]

Field dates: 1946-1947
Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologists-5
Processed in 1960

- 5: Webb, T. Theodor. The Aborigines of East Arnhem Land, Australia. Methodist Laymen's Missionary Movement, Victoria, 1934.

Pp. 28; 1 map.

Yale: Nkd95 N6 934w

[Webb was a missionary among the aborigines of north Australia. This source is a reprint of a lecture he delivered to the Methodist Wesley Church in Victoria. It is a brief summary of the Murngin's social organization and religious practices. The author describes lucidly their kinship system which is based upon two individually exogamous, but intermarrying moieties. There is also information on arts and crafts, warfare, and mythology. --Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1930

Analyst: Robert Lee

Evaluation: Missionary-5

Processed in 1960

6: Berndt, Ronald M. Kunapipi. Melbourne: F.W.Cheshire, 1951.

Pp. xxxii, 223; preface; introduction by A.P.Elkin; appendix; index;
17 plates; 10 text figures; 2 end maps.

Library of Congress: GN. 470. B 36

[Pp. 84-204 (texts) have not been processed.]

[The material for this study was collected by the author, a professional anthropologist at the University of Sydney, during his visit to northeastern Arnhem Land in 1946-1947. The main purpose of the work is to show some of the fundamental features of an Australian aboriginal religious cult, in this case the Kunapipi, which was introduced into this region from the south.

In his step by step analysis of the various features of the cult, the author discusses the origin of the Kunapipi, its mythological basis, its expression through the sacred rituals, and its impact upon the Murngin, as reflected through the interpretation of their dreams. Interesting data are also to be found in this source on women's status in the society, fertility rites, and ceremonial songs. --Analyst]

Field date: 1946-1947

Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1960

- 7: Berndt, Ronald M. Djanggawul: An Aboriginal Religious Cult of North-Eastern Arnhem Land. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1952.

Pp. xxiii, 1-92, 292-320; map; 16 plates; glossary; index.

Library of Congress: DU 397 .5 .B4 1952

[This source describes a religious cult of the Murngin. The author recounts the myth, provides translations of songs and describes the ceremonial connected with this cult. The major symbols are described and related to other cultural elements and the various themes of the myths and ceremonies are explicated. In particular the emphasis on fertility and sex are discussed. One section of this book dealing with the second part of the mythological cycle has not been processed for the files. The author, an anthropologist, did field work in Arnhem Land with his wife who provided him with some of the material used in this account. --Analyst]

Field dates: 1946-1950

Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1960

- 8: Berndt, Ronald M. and Catherine H. Berndt. Arnhem Land: Its History and Its People. Melbourne: F.W.Cheshire Pty. Ltd., 1954.

Pp. vii, 243; end map; 21 plates; index.

Library of Congress: DU 398 .A7B4

[Pp. 26-176, 212-227 have been omitted from the Files.]

[This source deals with culture contact and acculturation in Arnhem Land. The sections processed for the files include a brief description of geography, and a general cultural summary as well as materials on the history of contacts. The authors consider the effects of early Malayan contacts on Murngin culture and on their later relations with Japanese and Europeans. The present day situation and Australian government and missionary policy is also discussed. The final chapters include a summary of some policy recommendations for dealing with the Murngin. Omitted from the files is a section on Western Arnhem Land which is inhabited by non-Murngin peoples and some material on specific incidents of acculturation. This section also includes some materials on the cultures of Malaysians and other groups in contact with the Murngin. All of the footnotes in this source will be found in category 116, pp. 204-211,

8: Berndt, Ronald M. and Catherine H. Berndt.

and 228-230. The authors are ethnologists who have done extensive field work in this area. --Analyst]

Field date: 1946-1950

Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1960

- 9: Thomson, Donald F. Economic Structure and the Ceremonial Exchange Cycle in Arnhem Land. Melbourne: MacMillan Co., 1949.

Pp. vi, 106; 2 end maps; 11 plates; index.

Library of Congress: GN 489 .T47

[Thomson, who had lived in Arnhem Land for many years, was well acquainted with the economic life of the people which he investigated in this monograph. He has found that through the institutional exchange of gifts among the inhabitants of different localities, the special products of each locality were able to circulate along definite routes to distant points. The author demonstrates that this exchange cycle, aside from its economic significance as a special means of bartering goods, provides the needed incentive for work, enhances the personal prestige of the individual, and cements the bond between the separate kin groups. The influence of Macassar fishermen and traders in giving impetus to this exchange cycle is especially stressed in this book. The economic and social background of the Murngin is also given adequate treatment. The author distinguishes between the clan and horde which have marked for sib

9: Thomson, Donald F.

(614) and clan or community (618 or 621) respectively. --Analyst]

Field date: 1935-1943

Analyst: Robert Lee

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1960

- 10: Warner, W. Lloyd. Mahkarolla and Murngin Society. A Black Civilization: A Social Study of an Australian Tribe, pp. 566-589, revised edition. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958.

Pp. 25.

Yale: Nkd95 N6 937Wb

[This source is an appendix added to the revised edition of A Black Civilization (1: Warner). Mahkarolla was an influential elder in the Murngin community that Warner investigated. When he was a boy, he was taken on a white man's ship as a cabin boy and visited many places along the Australian coast. Warner has recorded here, mostly in Mahkarolla's own words, the story of his life including such information as childhood activities, circumcision rites, seduction by a foreign woman, and marriage. Mahkarolla's attitude toward the various Murngin institutions and the world about him is brought out successfully in this short but interesting report. --Analyst]

Field date: 1926-1929
Analyst: Robert Lee

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1961

- 11: Webb, T. Theodor. Aboriginal Medical Practices in East Arnhem Land. Oceania, Vol. 4, pp. 91-98. Sydney: The Australian National Research Council, 1933.

Yale: Nk10. Oc2. v.4

[This article, written by a Methodist Missionary in Australia, deals with the medical practices of the people of East Arnhem Land. In this paper the author describes in some detail a variety of therapeutic techniques used by the Murngin in the treatment of burns, sores and injuries. He also describes briefly the magical techniques of treating certain types of injuries and diseases by the marrngit or shaman, when their cause is thought to have originated in sorcery. At the end of the article, the writer presents a list of plants used by the Murngin in their medical treatments. --Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1930
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Missionary-5
Processed in 1961

- 12: Webb, T. Theodor. Tribal Organization in Eastern Arnhem Land. Oceania, Vol. 3, pp. 406-411. Sydney: The Australian National Research Council, 1933.

Yale: Nk10. Oc2. v.3

[This article, although short, contains a substantial amount of information on the basic elements of social organization among the native inhabitants of Eastern Arnhem Land. The general discussion centers on the local horde, the moieties with their subsections and the system of marriage between members of the subsections. A chart is presented in the text, accompanied by a map of Eastern Arnhem Land, showing the locations of the various hordes, and the mala into which they are grouped. The author concludes his paper with a discussion of the mala and theorizes as to the common origin of the various hordes, many of whom, although widely separated in space, share the same mala. --Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1930
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Missionary-5
Processed in 1961

- 13: Elkin, A. P. Marriage and Descent in East Arnhem Land. Oceania, Vol. 3, pp. 412-416. Sydney: The Australian National Research Council, 1932-1933.

Yale: Nk10. Oc2. v.3

[This source discusses what the author considers a "rectification" of errors made by Webb and Warner in their respective studies of East Arnhem Land kinship. His major criticism is leveled at Webb for his study of social organization in East Arnhem Land, (source 12, this file), especially in regard to the rules of descent in the subsections and their concomittant regulations on marriage. In an attempt to clarify matters, the author presents a detailed analysis which he considers more nearly correct, bearing on the rules of descent and the resulting regulations pertinent to marriage patterns in the subsectional system in East Arnhem Land.

The author, a well-known professional anthropologist, is a specialist in the ethnology and social organization of the native peoples of Australia--Analyst].

Field date: no date
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-4
Processed in 1961

- 14: Thomson, Donald F. Marrngitmirri and Kalka - Medicineman and Sorcerer - in Arnhem Land. Man, Volume 61, Article No. 131, Pp. 97-102, plates I and J. London: The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1961.

HRAF copy (Theodoratus)

[This article was written for two purposes. First, the author gives an account of the Murngin 'marrngitmirri' (shamans) and their spirit familiars, and the activities of the Murngin 'kalka' (sorcerer). Secondly, he wished to correct certain misconceptions regarding the relationships between the shaman and the sorcerer which had appeared in an earlier article on the same subject by T. T. Webb. --Analyst]

Field date: 1935-1943

Analyst: Robert J. Theodoratus

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Processed in 1962

- 15: Chaseling, Wilbur S. Yulengor: Nomads of Arnhem Land. Introduction by A. P. Elkin. London: The Epworth Press, 1957.

Pp. xxvi. 173; 20 plates.

Yale Divinity Library: MW61.4.C386y.

/The author was sent to Yirrkala in the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve by the Methodist Missionary Society, not only as a missionary, but with the objective of preserving certain aspects of native culture (its ceremonies and social organization) and changing other aspects (introducing agriculture and medicine, and discouraging infanticide and warfare). The account is generally ethnographic. It is best in giving a picture of the everyday life of the people and in illustrating the integration of religion with other parts of culture.

A myth from West Arnhem Land has been marked for the file OI5 Australian Aborigines. -- Analyst/

Field date: ca. 1934-1936
Analyst: Joan Steffens

Evaluation: Missionary-5
Processed in 1964